

**Indiana Disproportionality Committee  
Steering Committee Meeting  
June 11, 2008**

**Minutes**

This meeting was held at Lutheran Child & Family Services.

**Present:** Jennifer Darby (ICJI), Brant Ping (CAJP-JWICT) Chris Morrison, (IFCAA), Kristin Clements-Effner (Children's Bureau), Nakaisha Tolbert-Banks (InteCare, Inc.), Calvin Roberson (IMHC), Richard Curry (MCJDS), Robert Ross (IJTTF), Susie Kennedy (MCDCS), Delores Kennedy-Williams (White's Residential Services), Monique Busch (Lutheran Child and Family Services), and Clara Anderson (Children's Bureau).

The meeting was convened by Clara Anderson at 1:00 p.m. All present were welcomed and introduced.

**Host Agency:** Lutheran Child & Family Services hosted the meeting and Monique spoke about the facility, the current renovations and some of the programs that the agency provides.

**The April 9, 2008 minutes were reviewed and approved with no corrections.**

**Update on 2007 Annual Report:** Jennifer Darby stated that they were ready to post information on the website, including the Annual Report. Clara Anderson said that the Commissioners use the website and find it helpful to direct their reading, so the Minutes will need updated and of course, the Annual report will be added. Clara said the 2007 Annual Report had been distributed and she thanked McCoy for printing the report. She also said that she had mailed it to the Legislature members – 150 copies – and provided a cover letter. Clara said that if committee members needed cover letters she could print it and they could add their own signature for their own members. Clara said that McCoy has printed copies for the City-County Council but that postage is needed for that mailing. Clara asked for donations from anyone of the members and Calvin Roberson said he would check to see if they could donate. Most of the rest of the distribution will be done electronically, however Clara suggested that the Steering Committee members provide a printed copy to their respective CEO's of their agencies. Clara highlighted some of the features in the Annual Report, such as the number of trainings that the Committee provided and the future direction of the Committee's work.

**Review of survey results:** Clara stated that most of the meeting will be spent on planning but she had the latest summary of the survey, which she distributed. She said that the survey will help with the discussion on the future direction. Monique Busch said that there was still confusion about the difference between the Steering Committee and the Commission and she reminded the Committee that they carry on with their work with the Commission's recommendations, and that it was the Commission's term that expires this year, not the Committee.

Members discussed the task of the Commission and that their report is due to the Governor by October 15<sup>th</sup>, yet the report will not be issued to the public until December. Clara said that confusion was reflected in the survey results but it was also easy to see the benefit of membership to the Committee. The survey was sent to approximately 80 people but only 10 responses were returned.

**PLANNING FOR IDC'S FUTURE:** One member suggested that the Committee should be considered the expert for a curriculum on cultural competency and that the Committee should determine a standard. It was pointed out that through ICJI the Disproportionality Committee will receive funds to do the curriculum piece and will be offered statewide, targeting five communities for participation to develop standards. Members were reminded that we must keep in mind our own capacity. Clara reiterated some ideas that were suggested as priorities:

- Cultural Competency defined
- Training standards
- The IDC can Champion the Commission's recommendations
- Educating the community
- Data Integration
- Craft special messages (for the media)
- Identify ways to build further capacity for the Committee

It was suggested that we further explore the data integration – getting systems to talk together for data collection and track certain data indicators, through JJS and all state stats, etc.

Robert Ross stated that he attended a Town Hall meeting in Kokomo and heard people say they didn't know what to talk about because they didn't know what the issues were.

The feeling of the members was that one of the Committee's primary goals was educating the community and this should still continue because there is no one else doing it.

With regard to crafting some special messages – the idea was to influence leaders to shape data integration within the separate database systems within government.

The JJS Sub-committee will recommend a Task Force to continue working on issues after the Commission. There were questions as to whether their goals were long-term or whether they were the same as the IDC's. Members felt that having a body that continues to champion the effort is important, and were reminded that a similar concern helped to create the Children's Coalition which got started over 20 years ago. And choosing a word like Task Force is even something to consider.

A member noted that in other committee meetings in which she is involved, no one mentions the Commission. The Committee needs to let the Commissioners know that their work needs to continue to be made part of awareness in the public.

Capacity is the number one thing for the Committee to be realistic about – we've worked hard for four years and we must continue to work hard – for instance, mailings still must be done. We need to maintain and champion our voice – a centralized, consistent voice is needed. We need to identify ways to build capacity, so the Resource Sub-committee becomes very important.

It was suggested that we find ways to do some pilot research locally within the state and within the child welfare system because case management does rely on cultural competency to make a difference in how cases are handled.

Richard Curry talked about a project down with the juvenile detention unit of another state but that they couldn't use the stats since it was a pilot project; however they are looking at the information to see what message it provides them with regard to specific issues, such as recidivism.

The ability to see differences by race, sex, and ethnicity cannot be seen without measurements. When we don't separate the numbers we can't look back and see or recognize that we're seeing race and racism influence – these are sensitive subjects in creating data collection. So, if our approach is like a bull in a china shop, we'll turn people off. A good database is important because it is the same kids impacting different systems, but agency's respective databases are sacred, so we need members of the community saying they want to see the numbers and hear about the issues.

Cultural competency is such a huge issue – two hour trainings are not enough training to understand all the different issues we face in different cultures – it must be recognized that people have limited experiences from which to draw on while they learn.

A member stated that the Department of Corrections is an institution that has its own culture and their training is inadequate. Two-hour training is not enough to assist people. There is a saying that some use, "I've got diversity – I don't need competency!" If someone gets good training it opens them up to other ideas. People think that cultural competency just means how to work with black people.

Another member stated that the public needs to know it is not possible to know everything about a culture, meaning that people assume that there is one perspective within any given culture based on one's color, but the reality is that people from other countries look, live and work like us, so we often overlook their unique cultural values.

In regards to curricula, members felt that there was not much available in the public for models but that there should be a basic curriculum for core competencies and then for advanced competency.

In regards to future work, it was suggested that we re-survey on the top three priorities and have survey participants choose from a list of 10 priorities to determine the top three. Members discussed that some of the priorities run together – for instance, community/agency education. Looking at what the Commission is doing – in four areas – but some similarities exist in each area – cultural competency must be defined for each area, such as legal issues for instance.

Member talked about developing a strategic plan with methodology and action steps, asking whether we can do this from our goals we choose and forecast what we're doing. Calvin suggested we use Solution Center Resources to help us facilitate group meetings. It was felt that participation was vital and that members needed to encourage others from the core group to continue participating, and it was noted that some members had left the group from last year. Clara stated that being committed to being involved was important and that we had to nurture some participants as well as continue to meet at different locations as members found that helpful.

Members continued to discuss capacity and suggested that we employ some web-based conferencing technology and other ways to use technological resources to help expand participation. We recognize that there is a desire to participate and have a dialogue – especially between systems – to continue public forum opportunities and continue to encourage input in the process. It was suggested that we develop regional committees and have those chairs sit on the state Steering Committee. And members should engage those who have been with us prior to help with strategic planning around the sub-committee work. Members talked about Membership Dues and wondered if this would help participation.

Another issue discussed was looking at ways to help measure our own local efforts – how to hone in on details of what happens in the front-end decision making for a child in the child welfare system for instance. Get more people involved who want to do something about the disproportionate issue.

Members recognized that having the Stakeholder meetings and the public forums have been beneficial because parents, teachers, ministers, and others hear the issue and become genuinely concerned. Before the Commission's report, the Committee will establish its own priorities for the work in the remainder of the year. The importance of attending and participating in the public forums was stressed and it was noted that there is another opportunity to participate locally on July 24<sup>th</sup> and July 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Members were reminded to look at the draft recommendations on August 27<sup>th</sup>. Six sites will all be networked and will share their information from the public.

Upcoming events were acknowledged for IDC participation, such as the Juvenile Judges Symposium, where a broad presentation will be made from the Commission's work and an update on the juvenile detention project. The IARCCA conference in September will highlight a published article co written by the Committee and IARCCA External Evaluators in the *Child Welfare* journal. The Adoption Forum will offer a presentation by the Commission's Co-Chair, Angela Greene and the IFCAA conference will take place in November and information will be presented there also. The model court liaison was impressed by the conference and wants to do another project like the one Judge Moore did with the model court. The national JDI group will be in Indy in September and members suggested that the Committee consider responding to calls for proposals to present in other states and bring some national attention on the work that Indiana is doing.

The next meeting will be held August 13<sup>th</sup> at White's Residential Services. The address is 6330 E 75<sup>th</sup> S Street, which is on the northwest corner of 75<sup>th</sup> and Binford Blvd – when you first turn into the complex from 75<sup>th</sup> Street, look for the 3<sup>rd</sup> driveway opening on the left.